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ABSTRACT

Reliable data indicate that children are safer at school than away from school and commit fewer crimes during school hours than after school ends. The data reported in this Bulletin document the need for schools and communities to develop strategies for youth during afterschool hours. Research indicates that juvenile violence peaks in the afterschool hours on school days and in the evening hours on nonschool days. Afterschool programs have more crime reduction potential than juvenile curfews. Juveniles are also at the highest risk of being victims of violence at the end of the school day. The information provided demonstrates the desirability of exploring policy changes so that parents can provide more direct supervision during the afterschool hours. Local school districts and communities need to consider starting or expanding recreation, mentoring, tutoring, and homework programs as positive alternatives to unsupervised time in a child's day. (SLD)

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NOVEMBER 1999

1999 NATIONAL REPORT SERIES

Violence After School

As the Nation moves into the 21st century, the reduction of juvenile crime, violence, and victimization constitutes one of the most crucial challenges of the new millennium. To meet that challenge, reliable information is essential. Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report *offers a comprehensive overview of these pervasive problems and the response of the juvenile justice system. The* National Report *brings together statistics from a variety of sources on a wide array of topics, presenting the information in clear, nontechnical text enhanced by more than 350 easy-to-read tables, graphs, and maps.*

This Bulletin series is designed to give readers quick, focused access to some of the most critical findings from the wealth of data in the National Report. *Each Bulletin in the series highlights selected themes at the forefront of juvenile justice policymaking and extracts relevant* National Report *sections (including selected graphs and tables).*

Administrator's Message

In the midst of our national anxiety about recent violent tragedies in and around our schools and our search for solutions, we must be careful to act on the basis of fact, not fear, and to solve real problems, not imagined ones. Reliable data indicate that students are safer at school than away from school and commit fewer crimes during school hours than after school ends.

The real problem area is not the school itself but the world our children return to after the dismissal bell rings. In today's society, fewer and fewer children have a parent waiting for them at home when school lets out. As a result, youth often supervise themselves and younger siblings after school with varying degrees of oversight by parents and guardians. Most juveniles are responsibly engaged in an array of positive activities, such as sports, clubs, or homework, or they "hang out" harmlessly with friends. However, for youth who have few activities available, whose friends are prone to negative behavior, or who experience other risk factors, the unsupervised hours between school and dinnertime offer ample opportunity to go astray. Statistics show that serious violent crime committed by juveniles peaks in the hours immediately after the close of school.

At the same time, we should not fail to recognize that during these afterschool hours juveniles are most likely to become victims of crime, including violent crimes such as robberies and aggravated assaults. In this unsupervised time, youth are more vulnerable and more likely to be exploited, injured, and even killed.

The data reported in this Bulletin document the need for schools and communities to develop strategies for youth during afterschool hours. The information provided here demonstrates the desirability of exploring policy changes, such as flexible work schedules so parents can provide more direct supervision during these crucial hours. Local school districts and communities need to consider initiating or expanding recreational, sports, employment, mentoring, tutoring, arts, and homework programs as positive alternatives to unsupervised time in a child's day.

Knowledge is indeed power. Although we may not always be able to prevent isolated incidents of extraordinary violence, we can work together to develop programs and strategies that prevent juvenile crime and violence where and when they occur most predictably—away from school during afterschool hours.

Shay Bilchik
Administrator

OJJDP

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Juvenile violence peaks in the afterschool hours on school days and in the evenings on nonschool days

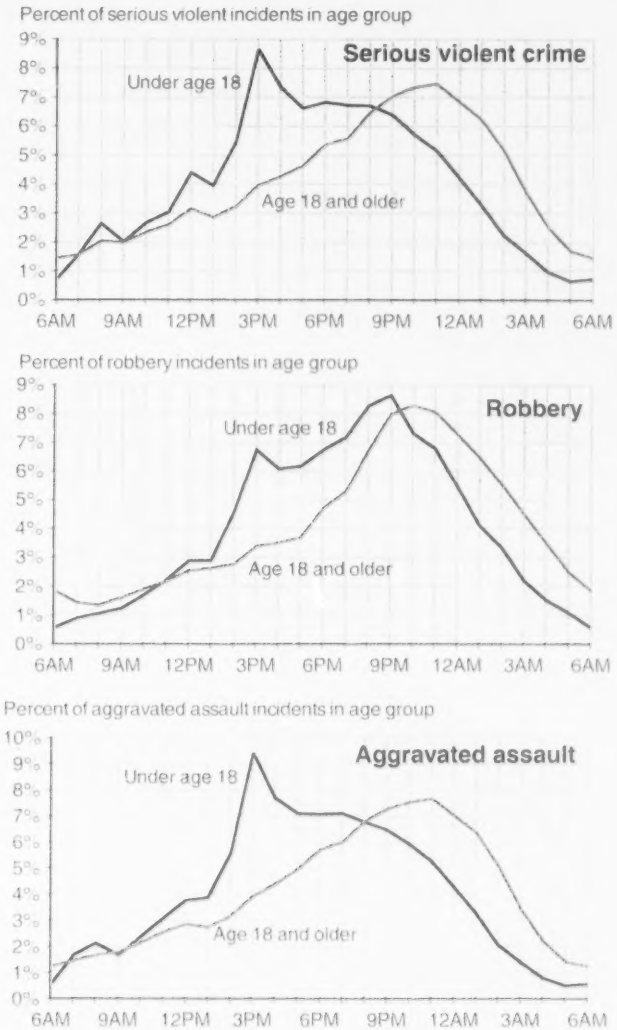
Juveniles commit crimes at different times than adults do

The FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) collects information on each crime reported to law enforcement agencies, including the date and time that the crime was committed. Analyses of these data document that the most likely time for committing a violent crime is different for juveniles and adults.

A new analysis of NIBRS data using the FBI's master files from 1991 through 1996 confirms earlier findings. In general, the number of violent crimes committed by adults increases hourly from 6 a.m. through the afternoon and evening hours, peaks at 11 p.m., and then drops hourly to a low point at 6 a.m. In stark contrast, violent crimes by juveniles peak in the afternoon between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m., the hour at the end of the school day.

The importance of this afterschool period in understanding the patterns of juvenile violence is confirmed when the days of the year are divided into two groups: school days (i.e., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays, in September through May) and nonschool days (all days in June through August, all weekends, and holidays). A comparison of the crime patterns for school and nonschool days finds that the 3 p.m. peak occurs only on school days. The time pattern of juvenile violent crimes on nonschool days is similar to that of adults, with a gradual increase during the afternoon and evening hours, a peak between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m., and a decline thereafter. Therefore, on both school and nonschool days, the level of juvenile violence is relatively low during the time period when juvenile curfew laws are in effect.

While adult robberies and aggravated assaults present similar temporal patterns, the juvenile patterns differ

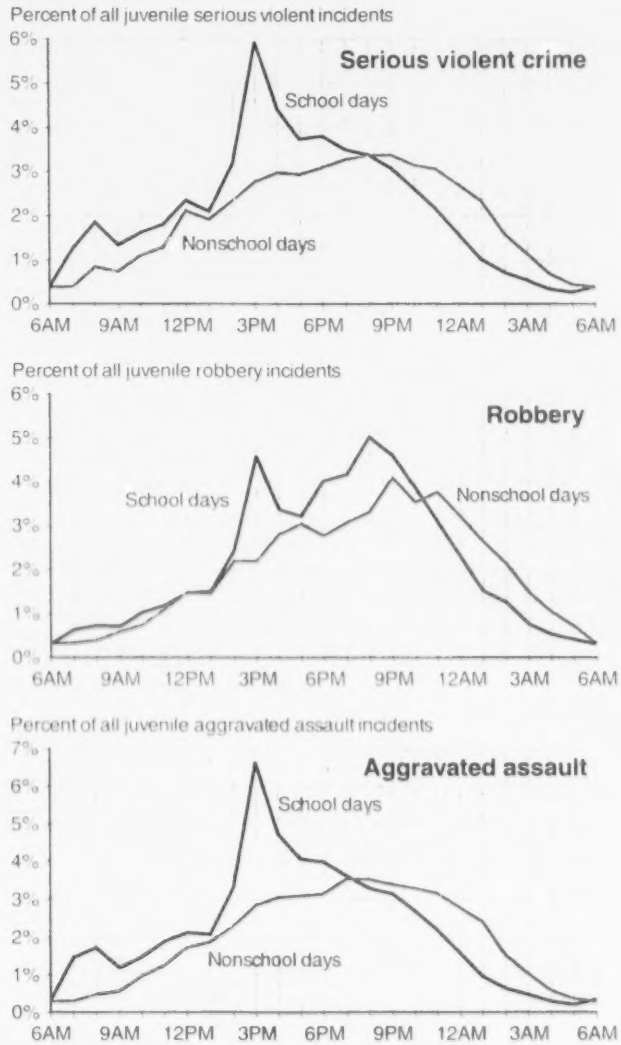


- Aggravated assaults by juveniles are most common around 3 p.m., while the number of juvenile robberies peaks around 9 p.m.
- About two-thirds of all serious violent crimes are aggravated assaults, so they control the overall temporal pattern of serious violent crime.

Note: Serious violent crimes include murder, violent sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. Data are from 12 States (Alabama, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Dakota, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia).

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *National Incident-Based Reporting System master files* for the years 1991–1996 [machine-readable data files].

Serious juvenile crimes cluster in the hours immediately after the close of school



- On school days, robberies and aggravated assaults by juveniles both peak at 3 p.m.; unlike aggravated assaults, robberies also peak at night.
- The temporal pattern of juvenile violence on nonschool days is similar to the overall pattern for adults: juvenile violence peaks at night on nonschool days.

Note: Serious violent crimes include murder, violent sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. Data are from 12 States (Alabama, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Dakota, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia).

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *National Incident-Based Reporting System master files* for the years 1991–1996 [machine-readable data files].

Afterschool programs have more crime reduction potential than juvenile curfews

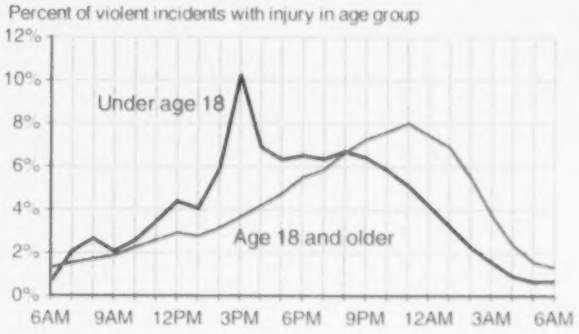
The number of school days in a year is essentially equal to the number of nonschool days in a year. Based on NIBRS data, 57% of all violent crimes by juveniles (i.e., murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault) occur on school days. In fact, 19% of all juvenile violent crimes occur in the 4 hours between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. on school days. A similar proportion of juvenile violent crime (21%) occurs during the standard juvenile curfew hours of 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. However, the annual number of hours in the curfew period (i.e., 8 hours every day) is four times greater than the number of hours in the 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. period on school days (i.e., 4 hours on one-half of the days in the year). Therefore, the rate of juvenile violence in the afterschool period is four times the rate in the juvenile curfew period. This analysis suggests that the potential for reducing a community's juvenile violent crime rate is greater for efforts to reduce juvenile crime after school than for juvenile curfews.

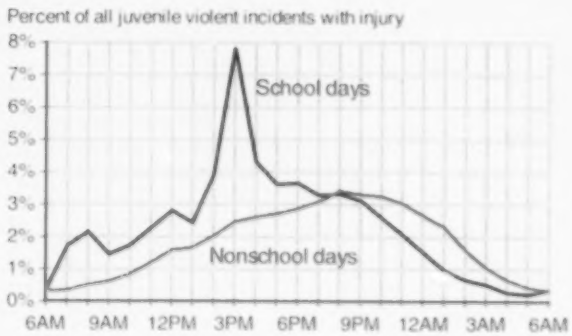
Sexual assaults by juveniles peak in the hours after school

The most likely hour of a school day for a juvenile to commit a sexual assault is between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. In fact, more than 1 in 7 sexual assaults by juveniles occur in the 4 hours between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. on school days. Unlike other violent crimes, sexual assaults by juveniles on nonschool days are most likely to occur between noon and 1 p.m.

Juveniles injure more victims in the hours around the close of school than at any other time

Violent crime with injury

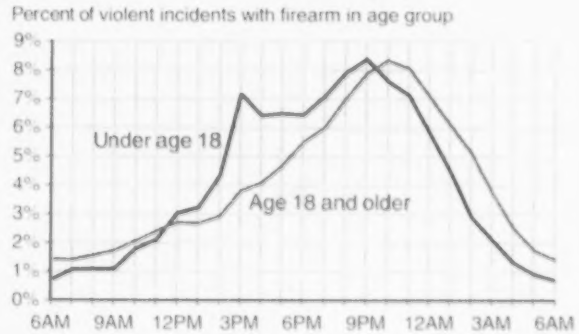


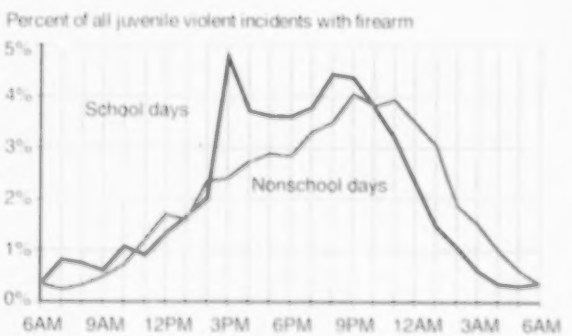


- The number of persons injured by adult offenders increases through the afternoon and evening hours and peaks around 11 p.m.

In general, the temporal pattern of violent crimes committed by juveniles with firearms is similar to the adult pattern, except for the high proportion of juvenile firearm-involved crimes that occur immediately after school on school days

Violent crime committed with a firearm





Note: Violent crime includes murder, violent sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Data are from 12 States (Alabama, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Dakota, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia).

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *National Incident-Based Reporting System master files* for the years 1991–1996 [machine-readable data files].

Juveniles are at the highest risk of being victims of violence at the end of the school day

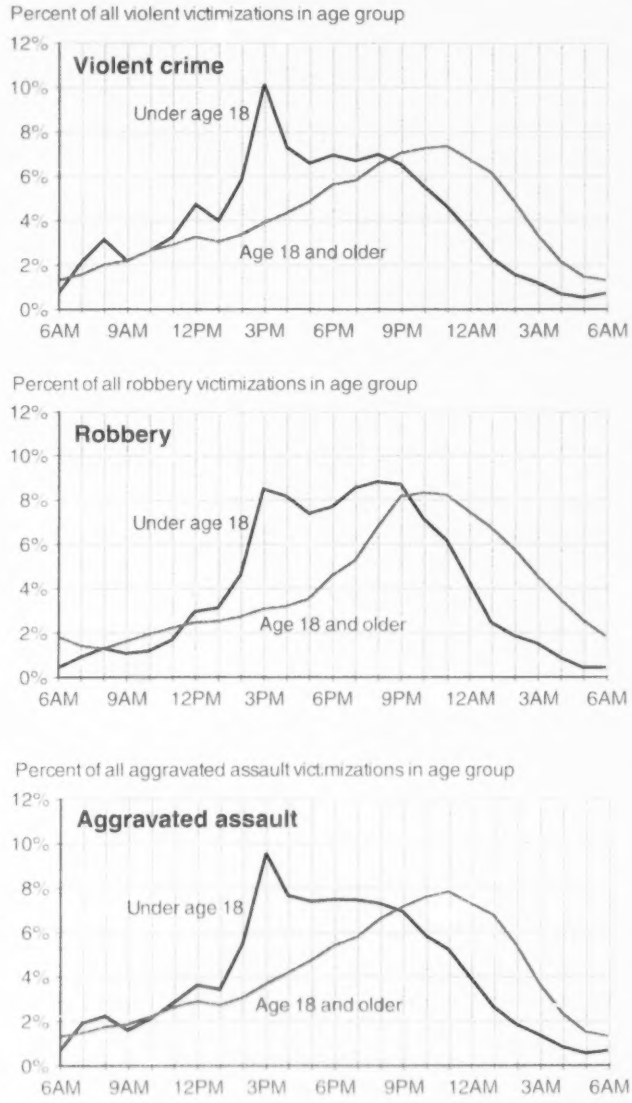
Victim reports and police incident data both show daytime juvenile victimization peaks

In recent years, analyses of the FBI National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data have highlighted the fact that juveniles are at highest risk of being the victim of a violent crime in the 4 hours following the end of the school day (roughly 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.). This pattern is based on reports of crimes to law enforcement. It is possible that the actual pattern of crime against juveniles differs from the police data, because much of juvenile crime is never reported to law enforcement.

To investigate this possibility, data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) were analyzed to determine the time periods in which a nationally representative sample of youth ages 12–17 said they had been victimized in 1996, regardless of whether the crime had been reported to law enforcement. NCVS asks the victims to indicate in which of a day's four 6-hour blocks their victimization occurred. For comparison, NIBRS data were then analyzed for victims of the same ages.

The results show that juvenile victims report even more crime occurring between noon and 6 p.m. (which includes the afterschool period) than indicated by NIBRS data. For example, NCVS victims indicate that half (51%) of all robberies occur between noon and 6 p.m., while the police data show that only 32% of juvenile robberies reported to them occurred during this period. Similarly, NCVS data show a greater proportion of aggravated assaults (49% vs. 34%) and simple assaults (59% vs. 38%) occurring between noon and 6 p.m.

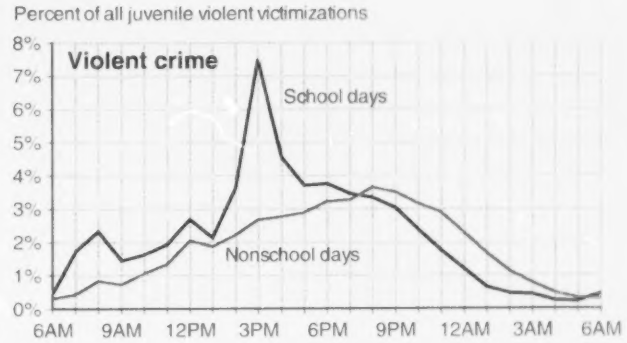
The violent victimization of juveniles is greatest between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m., while adult victimizations are most common between 9 p.m. and midnight

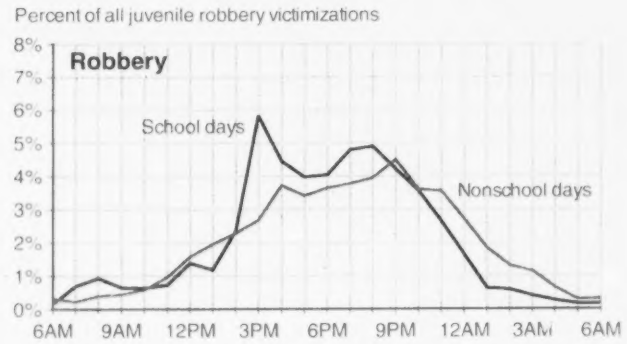


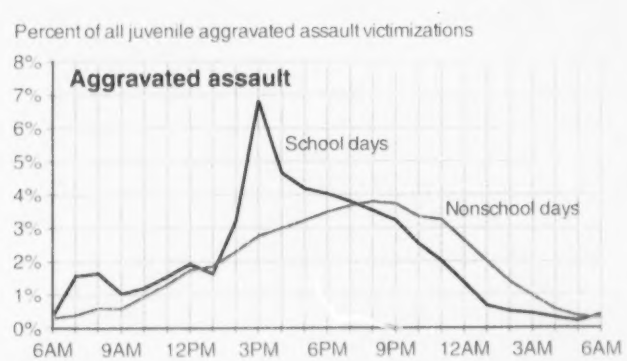
Note: Violent victimizations include the crimes of murder, violent sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Data are from 12 States (Alabama, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Dakota, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia).

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *National Incident-Based Reporting System master files* for the years 1991–1996 [machine readable data files].

1 in 5 of all violent crimes with juvenile victims occurs between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. on school days







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Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *National Incident-Based Reporting System master files* for the years 1991–1996 [machine readable data files].

Offense	Percent of all crimes against juveniles: Victim reports	Police records
Robbery		
6 a.m.–noon	14%	7%
Noon–6 p.m.	51	32
6 p.m.–midnight	32	49
Midnight–6 a.m.	4	13
Aggravated assault		
6 a.m.–noon	7	11
Noon–6 p.m.	49	34
6 p.m.–midnight	37	42
Midnight–6 a.m.	6	13
Simple assault		
6 a.m.–noon	21	14
Noon–6 p.m.	59	38
6 p.m.–midnight	18	39
Midnight–6 a.m.	2	9

It is reasonable that victim reports indicate greater proportions of victimization occurring during hours that include the afterschool period than do the law enforcement data. As NCVS data indicate, juveniles did not tell adults about a substantial portion of their victimizations, and when they did tell an adult, they often reported to authorities other than law enforcement (e.g., school officials). These authorities may handle the matter themselves or refer the matter to law enforcement.

Because crimes in and around school are likely to be reported initially to school officials who may not report them to police, such crimes may be less likely to be reported to law enforcement than crimes occurring at other times of the day. Consequently, law enforcement data may actually underestimate the proportion of crime that occurs in the afterschool hours.

In 1996, about half (48%) of serious violent juvenile victimizations occurred between noon and 6 p.m.

Victimization characteristics	Percent of juvenile victimizations			
	6 a.m.–Noon	Noon–6 p.m.	6 p.m.–Midnight	Midnight 6 a.m.
Serious violence	**10%**	**48%**	**34%**	**8%**
Rape	9	32	21	38
Robbery	14	51	32	4
Aggravated assault	7	49	37	6
Male	9	51	34	5
Female	10	42	34	13
White	9	50	34	7
Black	11	50	33	7
City	12	47	33	9
Suburban	5	55	34	6
Rural	17	34	39	9
Simple assault	**21%**	**59%**	**18%**	**2%**
Male	22	58	18	2
Female	18	60	19	2
White	21	61	16	2
Black	20	43	35	2
City	24	54	20	2
Suburban	19	64	15	2
Rural	21	50	25	3

- More than one-third (38%) of rapes occurred between midnight and 6 a.m., a proportion higher than any other violent crime for that time period. As a result, the time patterns for serious violent victimizations overall differed slightly for males and females.
- Time patterns for serious violent victimizations were similar for white juveniles and black juveniles, with half of all these victimizations occurring between noon and 6 p.m. In contrast, a greater proportion of simple assaults of black juveniles occurred during the evening hours.
- Compared with cities and rural areas, suburban areas had the greatest proportion of violent juvenile victimizations occurring in the hours between noon and 6 p.m.

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

Source: Authors' analysis of data for 1996 from the Bureau of Justice Statistics' *National Crime Victimization Survey* [machine readable data file].

Sources

Information for this Bulletin was taken from chapters 2 and 3 of *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report*. For full listings of sources for these chapters, see pages 49 and 84 of the *National Report*.

Resources

There are many youth-focused programs with afterschool initiatives and activities for children and youth. For comprehensive information on resources that support children and youth during out-of-school hours, visit **www.afterschool.gov**. This Web site, which is sponsored by the interagency Federal Support to Communities Initiative, provides a database of more than 100 Federal grant and loan programs; information on community success stories and networking opportunities for afterschool programs, Federal publications and clearinghouses, and Web sites designed for children and teenagers; and access to information on food and nutrition, health and safety, learning, recreation, technology, transportation, and volunteers.

Answers to frequently asked questions about juvenile justice statistics as well as periodic updates of data presented in *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report* are available on the Internet in the OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book, which can be accessed through the OJJDP home page at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org through the JJ Facts & Figures prompt.

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Resources *Continued from page 7*

For information on OJJDP initiatives related to the reduction of juvenile crime, violence, and victimization, contact the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (JJC) at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org or call 800–638–8736.

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Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report (NCJ 178257) is available online from the OJJDP Web site (www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org) under the JJ Facts & Figures section and the Publications section or can be ordered from OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse. Send an e-mail to puborder@ncjrs.org; call 800–638–8736 (select option 2); or write to the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849–6000. Be sure to ask for NCJ 178257.

Acknowledgments

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